

USDA: Invests \$1.8 million to improve community infrastructure for residents of Wisconsin rural towns

Posted on Friday, Jan 28, 2022

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STEVENS POINT, Wisc., Jan. 27, 2022 — United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development State Director for Wisconsin Julie Lassa today announced that [USDA is investing \\$1.8 million to build and improve critical community facilities](#) in several rural communities across Wisconsin. This infrastructure funding will increase access to health care and public safety while spurring community development and building sound infrastructure for people living in rural areas.

“USDA Rural Development is the lead Federal agency helping rural communities grow and prosper,” Lassa said. “One of our longstanding priorities is investing in modern infrastructure for rural community facilities. Today’s investments reflect how critical affordable financing is for health care facilities, municipal buildings, public works and first responder vehicles and equipment in rural communities. We remain committed to the many partnerships that it takes to continue to build new opportunities and improve the quality of life for people living in rural Wisconsin.” [[radio actuality 4.62MB 26second](#)]

The USDA is making investments in nine projects through two Rural Development programs that will fund essential community services to help rural America build back better, stronger and more equitably than ever before. These programs include [Community Facilities Direct Loans and Grants](#) and [Community Facilities Disaster Grants](#). The projects will finance emergency response vehicles and equipment; build or improve hospitals and clinics and help fund other essential

community facilities.

For example:

- Cumberland Memorial Hospital will use a \$500,000 Community Facilities Disaster Grant to provide additional funding for their new hospital in the city of Cumberland, WI that was financed with a Community Facilities Direct and Guaranteed Loan. The existing facility and equipment is antiquated and no longer meets the needs of the community. The new facility will enhance access and delivery of healthcare to an expanded regional area, providing crucial healthcare options for patients that would otherwise travel over 100 miles for care. Facility plans include increased support for outpatient services, orthopedics, podiatry, oncology, ear, nose and throat, family practice, obstetrics and gynecology, cardiology and surgery.
- Couderay Volunteer Fire Department will use a \$94,000 Community Facilities Direct Loan and a \$160,000 Direct Grant to build a fire hall to store equipment and conduct fire suppression training and operations. The new facility will be a 50' x 56' heated pole shed to extend the life of equipment and also provide three vehicle bays and a water supply for filling trucks. Serving the towns of Couderay and Hunter and providing mutual aid to Sawyer County and adjacent counties, a new fire hall will allow the volunteers to more efficiently serve the 1,079 residents within the area.
- The city of Park Falls will use a \$93,300 Community Facilities Direct Grant to purchase a fire truck and replace a 1991 vehicle that is no longer compliant with the National Fire Protection Association. The new truck will seat six, host its own generator, contain a 20-gallon water foam cell, and provide LED emergency lighting. This new vehicle will allow emergency responders to serve the 4,220 residents more efficiently in the city of Park Falls and the towns of Eisenstein and Lake.
- The city of Niagara will use a \$150,000 Community Facilities Direct Grant to purchase an end-loader for the public works department and replace a 1983 loader that requires regular, costly maintenance and is beyond its useful life. The new machine will allow the city to continue to provide snow removal and street maintenance services.
- The city of Niagara will also use a \$45,000 Community Facilities Direct Grant to purchase a vehicle and equipment for Niagara law enforcement. The new vehicle will replace a 2014 squad car requiring regular costly repairs. The new vehicle will also be equipped with a thermal printer, rear compartment

organizers, graphics and portable battery packs. This project will help city law enforcement continue to provide efficient public safety services for its 1,624 residents.

- The town of Beaver will use a \$110,000 Community Facilities Direct Grant to renovate the town hall and purchase equipment for the public works department. Equipment will include a 4-wheel drive tractor with grass and brush heads to provide street maintenance. Town hall renovations include the purchase and installation of a generator, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance renovations to the bathrooms, and power units to make doors accessible for patrons with disabilities.
- The village of Viola will use a \$405,000 Community Facilities Disaster Grant to provide additional financing to relocating streets and utilities in a portion of the community located on a flood plain. The project is being done in coordination with sewer and water relocation projects in the same area and will relocate residential and commercial development outside of the flood plain.
- The town of Mountain will use a \$110,000 Community Facilities Disaster Grant to purchase equipment for the volunteer fire department, including self-contained breathing apparatus air tanks, an air compressor, and an emergency generator to ensure the continued safety of volunteer emergency responders.
- The village of White Lake will use a \$146,000 Community Facilities Disaster Grant to purchase a loader tractor equipped with a mower, bucket and broom attachments and safety features to provide essential street maintenance and prevent potential work hazards.

Background:

More than 100 types of projects are eligible for Community Facilities funding. Eligible applicants include municipalities, public bodies, nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Native American tribes. Projects must be in rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less. For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/-/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant--program/wi>.

Interested parties should contact their local [Wisconsin Rural Development office](#) for information about additional funding, application procedures and eligibility. Also see the [Community Facilities Direct Loan Program Guidance Book for Applicants](#) (PDF, 669 KB) for a detailed overview of the application process.

Today's investments are in coordination with [USDA Deputy Secretary Dr. Jewel](#)

[Bronaugh's nationwide announcement](#) that USDA is investing \$1 billion to build and improve critical community facilities in 48 states, Puerto Rico and Guam.

Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/wi. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).